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Valley Star

VOLUME 54 , ISSUE 18 | LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE www.lavalleycollege.com | THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2000

CAMPUS SCENE

CAMPO DE CAHUENGA
When: Monday, Jan 8
Where: Cafeteria conference room
Historical Museum Association meeting, discussing the land mark. Guest speakers Guy Weddington McCreary and Jim Gulbranson, from Campo de Cahuenga.

LIGHT UP THE DAY
December 15 is Lights on for Life Day in memory of those killed and injured in alcohol related car accidents.

WINTER INTER-SESSION
begins January 2 and runs through February 5. Schedules available on-line or in the Administration Building.

VALLEY STAR
Starting in the Spring semester Sotiveat Sim will be the new Editor In-Chief. He can be contacted at the news room in BJ 114.

FINALS
Begin Friday, Dec 15

IN MEMORIUM
Betty Whitten Harris died November 27 in Santa Barbara at age 88. Former Counselor, President of the Faculty Association and member of the English department of Valley.

Got News?
Call the Valley Star

Barret Oliver/Valley Star
Club Latino United for Education members advertise their participation in Toys for Tots donation program

Toy drive brings out club spirit

■**HOLIDAYS:** Clubs help make donations for children.

By BARRET OLIVER
STAR REPORTER

Club Latino United for Education and the Freshman Club banned together to help Toys for Tots in a drive on Wednesday.

CLUE President Amelia Diaz said the drive has been going since December 1 and is planned to continue until the 20th.

Local radio station Power 106 came to campus to help draw attention and bring in a crowd. "We're trying to get people to donate for the toy drive," said Armond Kinard from Power. "We also have some give aways." Such as t-shirts, candy and CDs, he said.

Students are asked to bring new wrapped or unwrapped toys to the Student Services Office, Campus Center room 100.

Students show at Art Gallery

■**Artwork:** The first one-day student art show open to all.

By RICHARD ADES
STAR REPORTER

Up on the hollow walls in the gallery hung a dozen or more art works fashioned recently by Valley art students.

A new event to the campus, the Art Gallery Council utilized empty space between major shows to give all students on campus a chance to show their art and to interact, Tuesday.

"It also lets others see what other opportunities there are at Valley College in the art department," said Jill Bilney, council secretary.

Lasting from 1 to 6p.m., artists came, displayed their works and went as they had time to allow.

Styles ranged from classic to modern. One that came out of the printing class, was Gabriel Le Garreta's "Pieta", a reflection of Michelangeleo. Robin Default's drawing of a sloth was done in the manner of futuristic cubism. Tyler Hawkins displayed pottery, one piece of which was fired in the Japanese style of raku.

The Art Gallery Council hopes to continue to provide a forum for all students to show their work.

Alum celebrates culture

■**KWANZAA:** Artist shows her work and remembers heritage.

By SOTIVEAR SIM
STAR REPORTER

Salvador Aguilar/Valley Star
The Art Gallery hosted Synthia Saint James, left, showing her work to Valley President Tyree Wieder.

People of different cultures from the community came together on Saturday to join in the pre-Kwanzaa festivities which featured the artwork of Synthia Saint James, a Valley alumna, who created the official Kwanzaa stamp for the United States Post Office.

"What better way to celebrate Kwanzaa then to have the woman who created the Kwanzaa stamp," said Barbara Perkins, director of community relations and foundations.

"I like her vibrant colors," said Gael T. Davis, a community activist and a member of the National Council for Negro Women. "The faces have no features so they represent all people from all cultures."

Kwanzaa is a cultural holiday that stresses the principles of unity, self determination, collective work, cooperative economy, purpose, creativity, and faith. These seven principles have their roots in African American culture and heritage.

The event was also a chance to enlighten people about the cultural holiday of Kwanzaa. "It was different from anything that I have ever experienced," freshman Rafael Young said. "It's something that people can be proud of and look forward to celebrating."

Saint James addressed the crowd and told a tale of how her career started. "Since I was five I knew that I wanted to be an artist," Saint James said. "No one is going to knock down your door to discover you. You have to make yourself available."

Saint James has also written several children's books and has illustrated book covers for authors such as Alice Walker and Terry McMillan.

The pre-Kwanzaa celebration was started off with the entertainer Dwan Smith who talked about the importance of celebrating Kwanzaa and its origins. She described Kwanzaa as a process of recovery and reconstruction of African culture. "It's can be celebrated by everyone," Smith said.

For many in the crowd the appreciation and recognition of their culture has been nonexistent. Only recently has there been a push to emphasize African studies in class rooms.

"A people without a knowledge of their history is like a tree without roots," Smith said, quoting an unknown African philosopher.

Even though Kwanzaa is a celebration of African culture it also symbolizes learning about roots and embracing the uniqueness of everyone's culture.

"It's important to recognize the ethnic quilt on this campus," Barbara Perkins said. "If we don't share the richness of the culture on the campus it's a disservice to the students."

Loan program raises $1,200 for student books

■ **FUNDRAISER:** Luncheon helps students get needed books.

By ANDREA ZOLLMAN
STAR REPORTER

The Office of Student Services hosted a luncheon benefiting Valley College's Emergency Book Loan program in Monarch Hall Nov. 30.

One hundred and seventy people attended the luncheon, which raised more than $1,200, said Yasmin Delahoussaye, vice president of student services.

Brown's Bakery, in North Hollywood, and Pavillion's Place, in Sherman Oaks, donated more than $65 in decorated cookies and other desserts.

Delahoussaye said that the program now has almost $7,000 in funds. "We can help more people now." The Emergency Book Loan Program lends money to students who do not have the funds to purchase their books at the beginning of the semester.

Delahoussaye said the program was started by a faculty member, who wishes to remain anonymous, about two years ago. Donations from the Associated Student Union and individual professors keep the fund afloat.

"This program is open to any student, regardless of whether they're on financial aid or not," Delahoussaye said. The only stipulation is that the student pays back the loan by the end of semester in which they purchased the books.

Chantal Duson, a sociology student, benefited from the program for two semesters. "I didn't have the funds readily available to purchase the books myself," Duson said. She also said many students drop their classes because they cannot afford to buy the required books at the beginning of the semester.

"We hope to eventually create an emergency fund which would not be a loan," Delahoussaye said. "It would actually be money that we would give to the students that they would not have to pay back."

The Valley Star will not be published over the holidays and the winter intersession. The next issue will come out in the Spring Semester.

Valley Star Editorial

Charles Dickens' story "A Christmas Carol" was written in 1843 and depicts someone who has little regard for his fellowman. "Are you a modern day Scrooge?"

As neighborhoods fill with bright holiday lights, shoppers purchase presents and children go to see Santa Claus, we hear about peace on Earth and good will toward men. Yet, tempers fly while everyone tries to find that perfect gift and heaven help someone trying to find that parking place without road rage blazing. Bah! Humbug!

As friends and family gather together hanging ornaments and stringing up lights for the Christmas tree you watch from the distance never realizing that anyone of them may not be there this time next year.

It is no different for those who celebrate other faiths. Caring and showing respect and love to another human being is a theme that transcends all religions.

Images of Scrooge come to life as he encounters the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future. He was an ogre but he was given the chance to see his life in a new way. Not everyone has this opportunity. The petty differences brought about through arguments and misunderstandings have given rise to many family and friendships falling apart. Healing the relationships takes courage and offers a treasure beyond imagination. Scrooge learned the true meaning of his life. This should hold true throughout the year.

Remember to say the things you feel and tear down the fences that may have kept you apart from those you love. Everything else is meaningless in the larger picture of life. No one knows what each day may hold, so say it now for later may be too late.

The special gift of caring comes from the heart, so from the hearts of the Valley Star, the staff wishes all of you a safe and happy holiday season. May you all realize what really counts during this holiday season.

"Truth has no special time of its own. Its hour is now – always."

Albert Schweitzer
Nobel Prize winner, 1952

The Valley Star would like to receive and publish your letters. Letters are limited to 250 words, may be edited for length and must be free of obscene, libelous, racial, ethnic, religious, sexist or sexually oriented denigrations. They must be signed. Send to the Valley Star c/o Los Angeles Valley College 5800 Fulton Valley Glen, CA 91401 or left in the news room in BJ 114

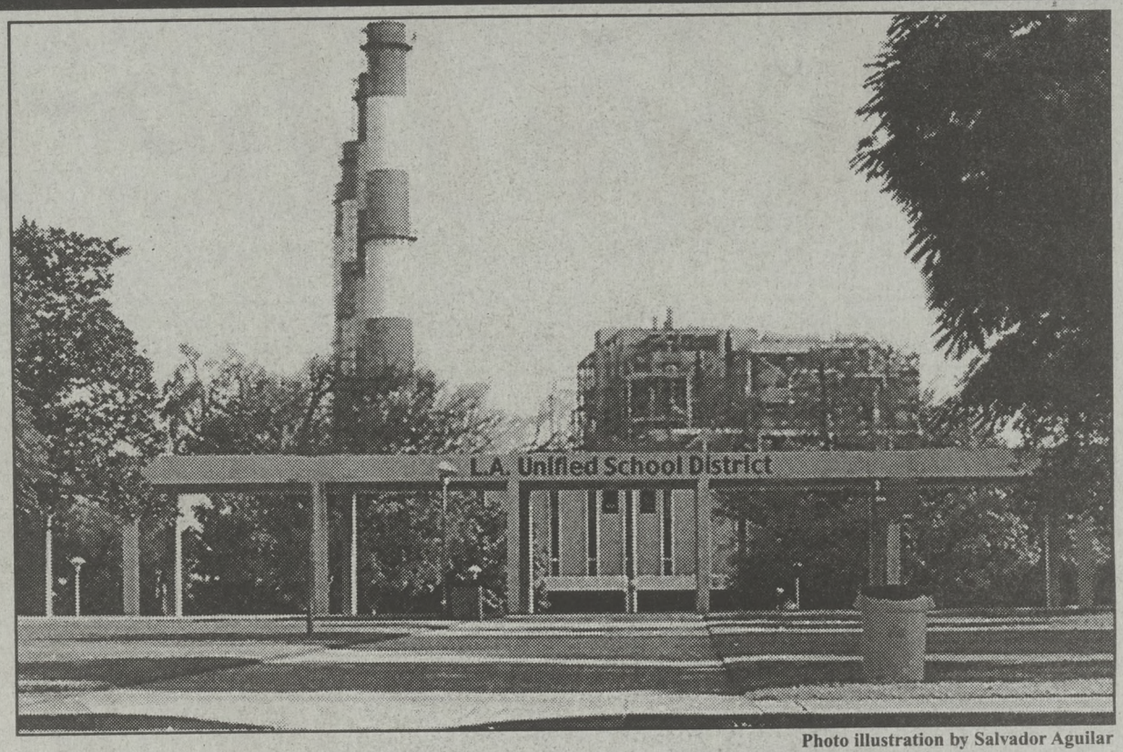


Photo illustration by Salvador Aguilar

School is a place to learn, not a factory to turn a profit or mass produce graduates.

Factory schools 'ain't' working anymore

By ANDREA ZOLLMAN
STAR WRITER

While listening to the radio, I heard a KNX report on a potential dispute between Los Angeles Unified School District teachers and administrators regarding a salary increase. An unnamed administrator said that employees in "any other line of business" would be thrilled to accept the kind of increase the school district was offering.

Although I understand the administrator was only making a comparison to other industries' standards regarding salaries, I wonder if the district has unintentionally reduced the public school system to a business where the only thing that matters is profit.

It disturbs me to think that this person associated education with business, especially after I voted no on Proposition 38. Had it passed, this school voucher initiative on last November's ballot would have given the public schools some healthy competition by giving children alternative educational choices.

The idea of education being run like a business conjures up images in my mind of a factory, which mass produces products, all built to the same specifications. Education cannot be mass produced, no matter how expedient it may be to do so.

If a child's education is the product of the factory, then the teachers are its workers. Each teacher has certain task: to teach that certain math skill or reading skill that a child needs in order to pass a standardized test. Only standardized tests can measure standardized information.

Are we to assume all children learn in the same, consistent way? Does one teaching method work for all children? Do standardized tests measure true ability or just superior test taking skills?

Standardized testing is an outgrowth of a business mentality. Cars come off the assembly line and are tested for efficiency and safety. It seems as if someone decided that children should be tested in the same manner. A standard is set and then if children do not meet that standard, teachers are to blame, parents are to blame, maybe even the children are to blame. But we never blame the actual model itself.

The present educational system needs change. The Victorian model, which holds that children are empty vessels into which information can be poured, is outdated. The 19th century writer Ralph Waldo Emerson said in his essay on self-reliance that, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines." If a principle no longer works, only a small-minded person will insist on adhering to it. Change will transform a dying system into a thriving one.

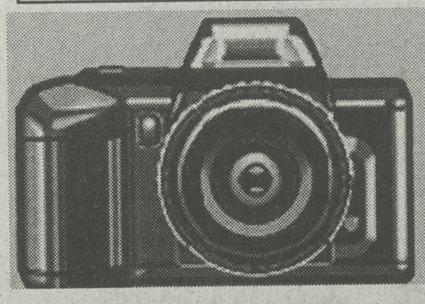
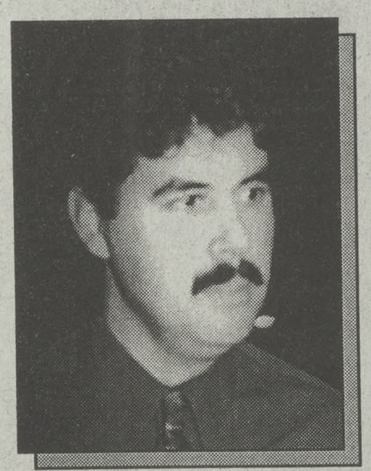


PHOTO SURVEY

Are you a Scrooge?

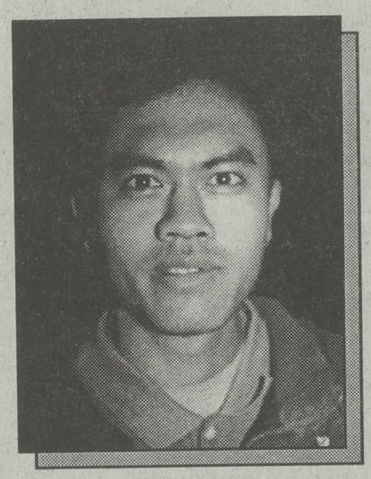


No... We're put on this planet for happiness. We're put on this planet to help others and not to be selfish and to work in the community. I do a run that benefits kids, fundraisers. So it's always good not to be a Scrooge.

- Pete Hoffman
Transfer student

I wouldn't say I'm a Scrooge. I think that's because how I am. You can't change yourself. Some people are just born like that.

- Mariya Petrosyan
Undeclared major



Fortunately, I wouldn't fall under that. I guess it's because I do care about people.

- Arsenio Llobrera
Engineering major

No. Because I like Christmas. It's just a great time of year for giving and enjoying family and friends.

- Missy Oestman
Liberal Studies major

photos by Karla Gutierrez

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A look back

LAVC 2000

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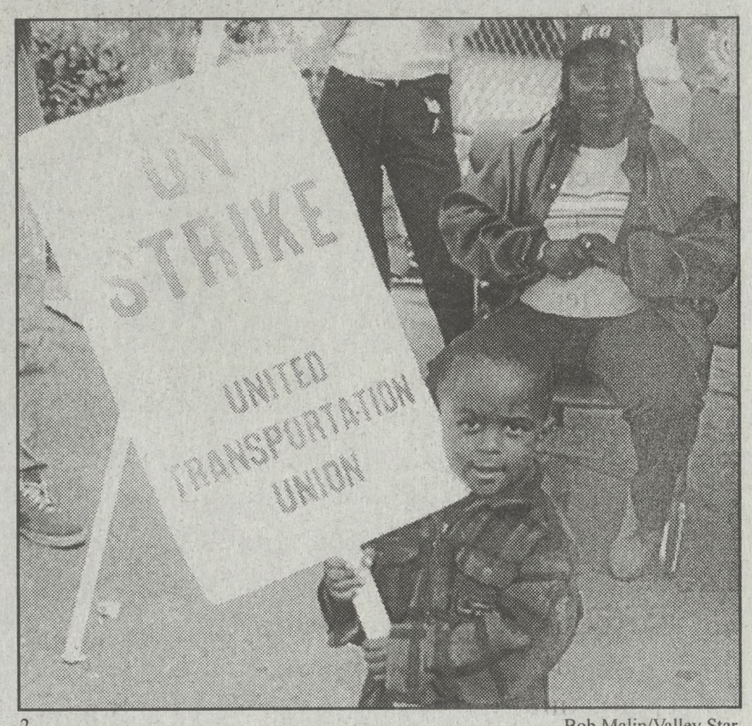

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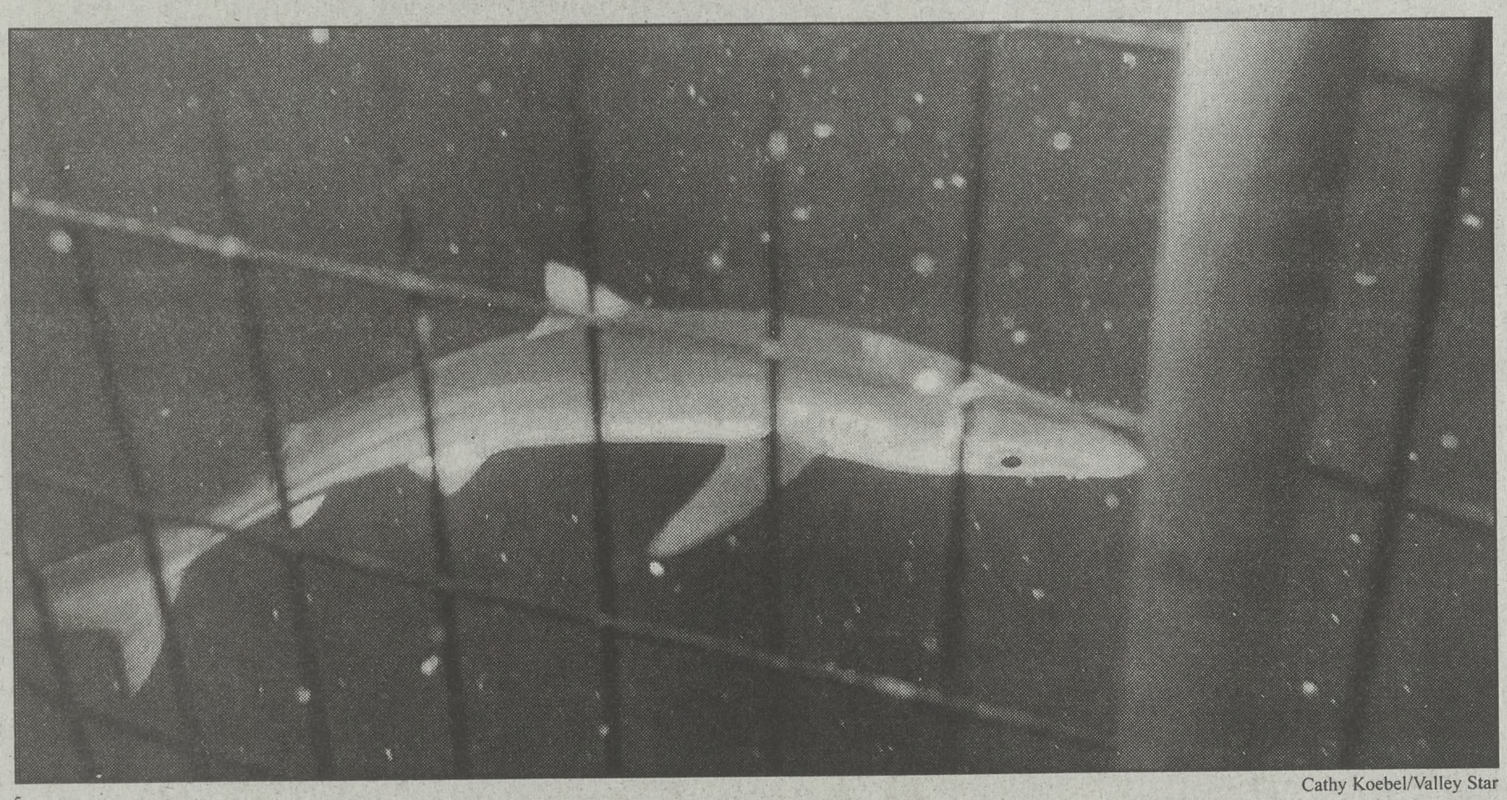
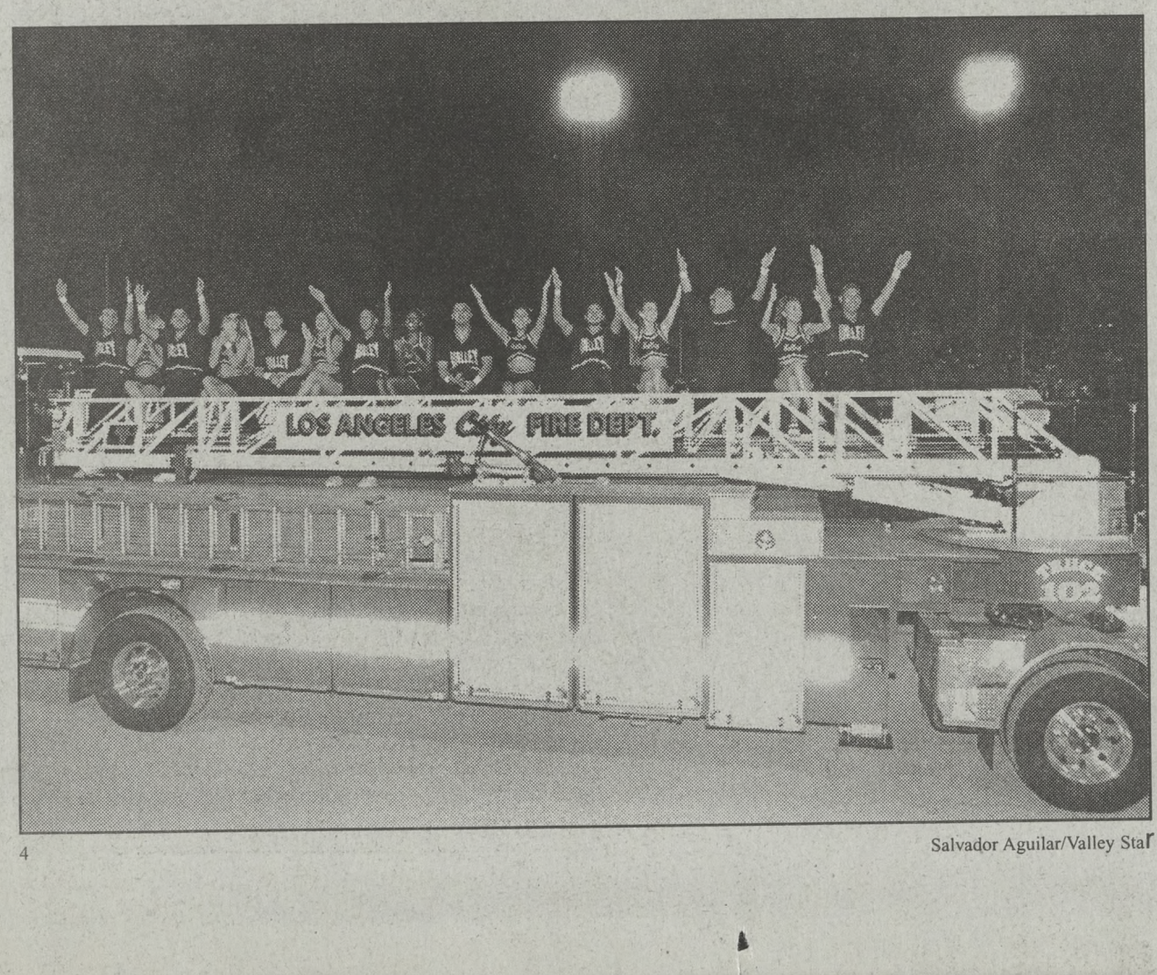


5 Cathy Koebel/Valley Star

A Visual Journey

The year 2000 was eventful to say the least. If something of significance was occurring Valley Star staff photographers were there to record it. The photographs on this page reflect a visual journey back through the fall semester. Clockwise from left -- 1. Demonstrators exchange differing opinions at the Democratic National Convention. 2. The MTA strike affected both young and old. 3. Bush supporters wait for election results in November. 4. Homecoming was a blast. 5. Professor Raskoff's Oceanography class went shark hunting.



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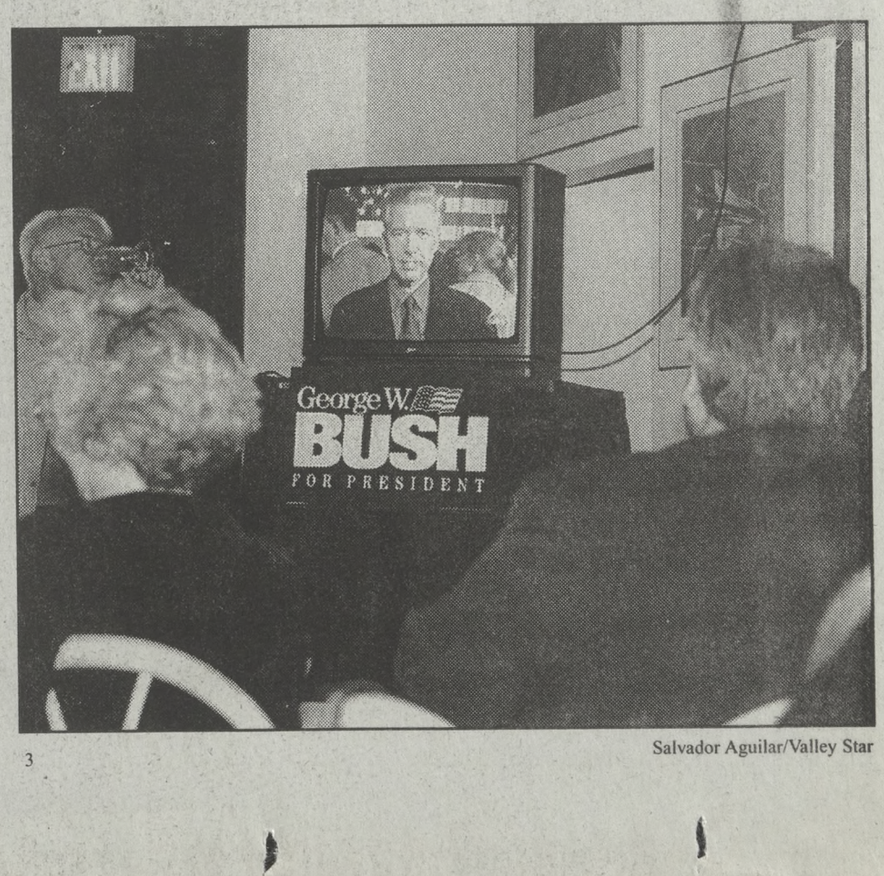

3 Salvador Aguilar/Valley Star

Salvador Aguilar/Valley Star

Hard knocks on hardwood

Grab a partner and do-si-do swing him round don't let him go, that's the feeling during a Monarch basketball practice when players lineup and go through their drills with their coach chanting out the orders to keep them in line.

■**BASKETBALL:** The Monarchs lose two games but at the Porterville Western Showcase.

By SOTIVEAR
STAR REPORTER

In the Porterville Western Showcase the men's basketball team were shutout losing to both Skyline College and West Valley College.

In their first game they lost 78-53. In the first half of play the Monarchs fared well, but never lead. When the whistle blew for the second half to begin the players weren't focused said guard Song Chun.

"In the second half we didn't want to fight," freshman guard Song Chun said.

A slow start in the second half spelled doom for the Monarchs as the Skyline team added to their lead and eventually took control of the game.

Their second game at the Porterville Western Showcase was a little bit more competitive as the two teams battled it out on the hard courts. The lead would change hands several times before the game was over with West Valley finishing on top with a score of 66-61.

"The game was back and forth the whole time," forward James Deloach. "But crucial mistakes at the end cost us the game."

"That's what the preseason is for to see what are our strengths and weaknesses," coach Doug Michelson said. "I like how we attacked their zone (defense)."

> "That's what the preseason is for to see what are our strengths and weaknesses."
>
> *Head Coach Doug Michelson*

The Monarchs have a tough preseason ahead of them. Coach Michelson uses the games here to fine tune the talent on his roster and prepare them for the regular season.

Except for some time off during winter break the men will be back in the gym and go back to business while the rest of Valley's students are relaxing.

The Monarchs are coming off a great season where they reached all the way to the State Final Four. That team had six sophomores go on to play at four-year universities.

This year the team is composed of four returning sophomores and nine freshmen. "The biggest obstacle this season is the team chemistry," Michelson said. "We have an excellent freshman class."

Their first home game of the season will be on January 3 against West Los Angeles College.

Sports Commentary

Pay stipend for athletes

By SOTIVEAR SIM
STAR REPORTER

In college sports today with athletes bringing huge amounts of revenue in for their schools, the issue for paying players a stipend for playing is becoming more of an issue.

The topic of giving student athletes a stipend along with their scholarship has been debated by both sides for a few years now.

Most players and coaches agree that these athletes are under much more pressure because of the time constraints that they are faced with while trying to be compete.

They must balance their time between practice, games, and school work.

The stipend will allow them to walk around with a little bit of cash in their pocket. We are not talking about giving them enough cash to buy a new car.

Many athletes come from disadvantaged backgrounds and don't have much money other than their scholarships.

This idea is not only for the student athletes headed for the professionals but should be available to all athletes.

A stipend is even more necessary in the days where some schools are making millions selling the rights to televise their games or by selling merchandise with the athletes name on it.

Yes, the argument has been made that these kids are getting an education in return and that is priceless. Give me a break.

In Division I programs, the percentage of athletes who stay all four years and graduates with their diploma dwindles every year. And in the case of basketball, some athletes choose to skip the college experience altogether.

Another problem that a stipend would alleviate is the trouble athletes are getting in when they encounter unscrupulous sports agents who waive money and other gifts to college athletes who don't know any better. With a stipend they won't be so willing to accept gifts from agents.

This, in turn, should decrease the number of suspensions that plague the NCAA every year.

It just seems like the schools are getting rich from the blood and sweat of these young men and women who go out and play their hearts out for themselves and their school. The logical thing to do is to pay them a small sum of money to repay them for their sacrifices.

Some critics in the NCAA say that such a plan is unfeasible. How much money is enough and does everyone get the same amount of money? All the players should get a fair amount, depending on the type of market they play in. The fact still stands that they should get some type of compensation for all the work that they put in.

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Wheels of fire
Heart of a champion

■ **HEART:** Mike Girodano,19, over came being born without legs to pursue his love for the game of basketball and life.

By SOTIVEAR SIM
STAR REPORTER

Inside the north gym, the sound of young men playing basketball permeates the air and through the dribbling of basketballs and the squeaking of sneakers, you hear the sound of wheels as they navigate across the floor, weaving between defenders.

These wheels belong to Mike Girodano. He has no legs and uses the aid of a skateboard to play basketball.

"I was born with no bones below my knees," Girodano said.

He would go to the park and watch other people play and he just wanted to go out their and join them.

Girodano has been playing on a skateboard since he was thirteen. When he first stepped onto a basketball court, he would get looks and whispers, but to Girodano it didn't matter.

"I didn't let them affect me," Girodano said. "I would just go out there and make them feel stupid when I balled them out."

This outlook on life has enabled him to pursue his dreams. After awhile what you notice about Girodano is not that he has no legs, but that he has a great sense of humor.

"He changed the whole attitude of the class," physical education instructor Diedra Starks said. "Everybody comes here to have a fun time and not be so competitive."

> "He has a lot of heart. He never gives up."
>
> *Perfecto Salas*

He even jokes with his teammates by telling them not to worry that he would get the jump and get the rebound.

When the competitive juice begins to boil, Girodano is not one to step down.

He has a whole arsenal of moves from killer crossovers to behind the back dribbles that he can use at any moment.

Girodano said that he uses a skateboard rather than the conventional wheelchair because he can get around easier. He propels himself around the courts with the use of one arm while the other is used to dribble. Girodano would use his other leg as a brake if he needed to make a pin point turn.

His love for the game of basketball led him to play for the YMCA. When he got older he volunteered as a score keeper.

Then he began coaching kids at the YMCA. "I love the kids," Girodano said. "They look up to me and respect me. Girodano has recently accepted a position with the YMCA where he is the basketball coordinator for West Valley YMCA.

Girodano hopes to get a teaching degree and be able to teach basketball.

Even though Girodano has no legs he is a more than capable athlete on the court.

In his basketball class at Valley he is one of the top players and has earned the respect of his instructors and peers.

"When I look at Mike I see him as an equal," Richard Majchrowicz said.

"He has heart, Perfecto Salas said. "He doesn't give up. Not many people would have the courage to do what he has done."

Not only is he teaching some of his classmates about basketball but he is also giving them a lesson in life.

Girodano credits his mother for his success.

"My mom has always been there for me," Girodano said, "My friends have helped me out a lot too."

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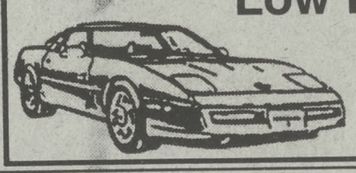

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